

Media Update

For immediate release:

May 17, 2021

Please call (406)322-1070 for any media related questions.

STILLWATER BILLINGS CLINIC WILL CONTINUE TO MASK

May 17, 2021 – Columbus, Montana. On Thursday, CDC released new federal guidelines regarding masking but Stillwater Billings Clinic will continue to require masks for all employees, patients, and visitors onsite.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated their federal guidance that was implemented last March at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. CDC's new guidance states that "individuals who are fully vaccinated may resume activities done prior to the pandemic without wearing a mask or physically distancing, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance."

"We are excited that our community now has the freedom to resume indoor and outdoor activities without the wearing of masks. Patient and employee safety continues to be our top priority. Although we are seeing an increase in community members being fully vaccinated, our care team at Stillwater Billings Clinic will continue to adhere to masking requirements and will ask patients and visitors to wear masks," says Kirby Johnson, Interim CEO, Stillwater Billings Clinic.

Stillwater County continues to receive Johnson & Johnson and Moderna allocations released from the state, in efforts to vaccinate more of the community. Public Health and Stillwater Billings Clinic Vaccination Teams have worked strategically to immunize as much of the county's population as possible, however, children under the age of 18 have not yet had the option to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in Stillwater County. The Vaccination Team will continue to follow Montana Governor Gianforte's guidance on vaccinating the remainder of the population.

Stillwater County's population is nearly 33% vaccinated according to a Stillwater County public health official.

Please continue to take all appropriate protective and preventative measures if you have not been fully vaccinated. If you have COVID-19 related questions, contact Public Health at 322-1070.

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